

### Third Sunday of Easter

All week we have had Peter and John preaching powerfully the truth about Jesus Crucified and Risen. This has seen them both being in conflict with the Jewish authorities – they have been told off, reprimanded, thrown into prison, flogged and the same again and yet they still continue to preach the truth about Jesus Crucified and Risen. These, supposedly uneducated and frightened men, have found an eloquence and courage that seems to be beyond them and this continues in today's readings, if at least a bit of a repeat of the previous week's proceedings! As we said last week, post the Resurrection the Apostles are totally and utterly convicted that Jesus is their Lord and God and nothing is going to dissuade them of this – not even public humiliation, flogging and jail, for as the Psalmist reminds us when he writes, 'Preserve me, God, I take refuge in you...You will show me the path of life, the fullness of joy in your presence, at your right hand happiness for ever.' And, this is what the Apostles and the disciples have discovered, seen and learnt from Jesus over the three years they journeyed with Him and had brought to Truth in the Resurrection – they have learnt that He is The Way to Life, the Way to the fullness of Joy and is Eternal Happiness – no wonder they can tolerate any misfortune and discomfort that comes their way, for they are fully rooted in Christ and with Christ and nothing is going to shake their belief and faith in Jesus Christ, now their Risen and Alive Lord.

So why do we meet up with two disciples who in today's Gospel are walking away from that place of crucifixion and resurrection – well mainly because they themselves have not experienced the Resurrection or the power of the Pentecost moment as have the Apostles and disciples, for this story is still placed in the very early moments of the time of Resurrection when all the Apostles and disciples were hiding out of fear and crushing disbelief that their Lord has died – and so the Lord chooses a few people to experience the awe and wonder of His Resurrection, women at first then several men, and here we have two of them on the road to Emmaus.

Hope has gone and been replaced with confusion and bewilderment and yet as we also do in our own lives, they talk and talk it through again and again trying to make sense of it – what have they missed, what did they not understand, what did they not get, how could this come about – still, I feel, wanting to believe in the words of their friends who said that they had seen him and he was alive, but how could this be true? Where is the Truth in that?

So it takes Truth itself - Jesus Christ the Risen Lord – to come among the disciples, and you and me, to help us understand the mystery of Death and Resurrection. Jesus explains that they had missed what was being said for centuries in Scripture, that they had misunderstood and misplaced their hopes, and that they did not get it, because they saw with the eyes of men, read with the eyes of men, thought and hoped with the mind and heart of men, but today Jesus the Risen Lord opens their eyes to see and their heart to both to burn with awe and wonder and understanding of Scripture and Eucharist – the Breaking of Bread. For, *to know Scripture is to know Christ*, as St Jerome would, a few centuries later, remind us.

At the point of what seems total failure – Good Friday – all the Lord Jesus had to offer is a meal, Scripture and the washing of feet, service, - Holy Thursday – for his followers to hold onto, and then in the whispers of Easter Sunday the rumour of His being Alive, begin to circulate and spread, and with His showings and then finally with the coming of The Holy Spirit at Pentecost the rumour can no longer be contained, it explodes into the fullness of Truth and Witness – His followers no longer are thinking of themselves, they only want to tell and tell again of this marvellous event and person, the Person they have come to know and believe in as their Lord and God and that He is their Life, their Joy and their Eternal Happiness.

How often it is in times of crisis that we as faith people and especially as Catholics turn to the Mass – where we see the Word of God proclaimed and broken open and the Breaking of Bread – this great comfort is our constant walk with Christ for it is here that we are caught up in Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, the Road to Emmaus and the walk back to Jerusalem – it is here that we come to understand and get what we previously did not understand or get – and it is then, in the breaking of Word and Bread in the Eucharist that we discover our true comfort and place of rest and peace, hope and joy and our glimpse of eternal Happiness.